13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



the over-riding cause is, I submit, low economic resources. It seems likely that families would remain in scattered homesites if they could afford to do so. Limited family resources force families to move nearer federal welfare and health services so that their distress is somewhat lessened. This dependency is part of the neo-colonial syndrome. I do not here decry the federal and state welfare and the federal health services given; I simply point out that restricted access to economic resources throws the low income families on the mercy of these services and revenues.

## a. trations in Household Types and Shifting Composition: 1966 and 1970

Here I follow the alterations in household types over a period of four years for each household type. The analysis will lend some support to the family cycle inferred from the earlier sample and the relationship between economics and household types.

### Independent Nuclear Family Households

In 1967 I visited 39 independent nuclear family households outside of Browning. In 1970, 34 remained nuclear family households. Fourteen of the 39 had changed location. Five of the households had transformed into new household types (see Diagram I).

Diagram I shows the direction in which transitions occur. Elder heads or miscellaneous kin have established single person households in three cases; a woman with an illegitimate child married and set up a nuclear household, while an elder head and his spouse assumed the care

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 28]

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594

Diagram 1

HOUSEHOLD TRANSFORMATIONS, FIVE FORMERLY INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR FAMILIES, RURAL BLACKFEET HOUSEHOLDS, 1970

| | |
|---|---|
| Case #1. Nuclear | Independent Nuclear<br>Dependent Nuclear<br>Single Person |
| Case #2. Nuclear | Independent Nuclear<br>Single Person |
| Case #3. Nuclear (deaths) | Remaining male remarried and established nuclear household. |
| Case #4. Nuclear | Grandparent-Grandchild<br>Daughter married, Independent Nuclear |
| Case #5. Nuclear | Single Person (Divorce, male's child moved to mother's residence in nuclear household) |

592 of two grandchildren and created a grandparent-grandchild household.
594 The other members of these households fissioned into nuclear and dependent nuclear families. The composition of one household (Case #3) changed because a woman and her only child were killed in an auto accident. The widower moved to Browning, and set up a nuclear household by marrying a divorcee and assuming care of her children.

592 The shifts evident in Diagram I are toward fission of diverse
128 household members. Elders become heads of late stage types (single
594 person and grandparent-grandchild) and younger persons become members of dependent or independent nuclear families. The data presented here also indicate a rate of transition among independent nuclear families of about three per cent per year. I suspect, based on previous observations, that these changes occur frequently.

592 Grandparent-Grandchild Households
594
603
[428]
[591]

This household form is somewhat more changeable than I had suspected during my earlier visit to the rural region. Grandparents who assume the care of grandchildren oftentimes provide for grandchild inheritance of grandparental properties, and the relationship is almost identical to a parent-child association. Yet in two cases parents whose marital and financial circumstances markedly improved, reclaimed their children, and in another case a grandchild moved into the household of a married female cousin. The remaining four grandparent-grandchild households remain of this type. Here we see then, three formerly grandparent-grandchild households moving into the final

592
594
603

stages of the family cycle. Two became conjugal pair households and one became a single person household. We see from these data that household response to economic variables--stable and moderately sufficient funds--is most predictable and sensitive.

592
594

Conjugal Pairs

Two of the five conjugal pairs changed. One became a single person household whereas the other joined an extended family household. The latter direct a modest ranching operation, and because age largely incapacitated the male head, a married daughter and her spouse and offspring moved in to keep the livestock business intact. The other three conjugal pairs remain the same.

592
596

Joint Family Households

The single joint family household, which consisted of married sisters (one spouseless) with their children and the spouse of one of the sisters, soon disbanded, as I had suspected. Each family head lives in a separate household. One woman remarried and resides with her children and husband in the center of Heart Butte, while the other lives in a welfare-provided trailer near her mother's family and is part of a mutual assistance land cluster. No new joint family household formed during my absence.

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NP6 Blackfoot NP6
Pigeon
Montana

128

## Correlation Ratio Diagram II

FAMILY TYPE AND AGE OF FAMILY HEADS, 194 BLACKFEET FAMILIES, 1921

| Family Type — Y (Family Type) | 20-24 | 25-29 | 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 | 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60-64 | 65-69 | 70 plus | Mean Age of Family Heads |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Head Family in Extended Family Household | | | | | 1 | | 3 | 2 | 7 | 5 | 1 | (60.7) |
| Grandparent-Grandchild (Household) | | | | | 1 | | | | 2 | | 1 | (59.5) |
| Single Person (Household) | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | (57.0) |
| Conjugal Pair (Household) | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | (46.0) |
| Independent Nuclear | 2 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 21 | 24 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 2 | (43.3) |
| Joint | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | | | | | | (34.1) |
| Dependent Nuclear | 1 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | (31.1) |
| Dependent Conjugal Pair | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | (27.8) |

Age of Family Heads in Intervals of 5 Years — X (Age)

$\eta^2_{xy} = .33$

---- = Trend line

592 128 Families are once again grouped into stages. Stage I (Figure I) represents all families whose heads are twenty to 34 years of age. This is the same procedure I followed in explaining the 1966 rural family cycle; I do this to obtain comparability. Frequencies and percentages of family types in 1966 are also shown in the following figures.

596 592 128 The rural Stage I families of 1921 are similar in types to the Stage I families in the 1966 sample. Dependencies are again the pattern. There are 22 Stage I families in multiple-family households, or 41 per cent of all Stage I families. In the 1966 rural sample 58 per cent of all Stage I families are in multiple-family households, a difference of 17 per cent. Another contrast is in the 20-24 age interval. In 1966 all of the families in this interval are in multiple-family households whereas in the 1921 sample four of eight were in households of this type. Also we see that independence characterized the 1921 Stage I families while in 1966 dependence predominates. These comparisons certainly indicate an increasing tendency toward early dependence in family life; virtually all newlyweds in the 1966 sample are with elders.

592 594 596 128 Stage II (Figure II) of the 1966 rural and 1921 rural cases are similar in comparative percentages of types, though dependent nuclear and dependent conjugal pairs stop in the 35-39 interval, dependent nuclear cases are found in the 45-49 interval and joint families go to 45-49 also. Families in multiple-family households account for ten per cent of the total in 1921; they account for fourteen per cent of the total in 1966. Statistically these differences are not significant. The differences in the two samples in Stage II are slight.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 101]

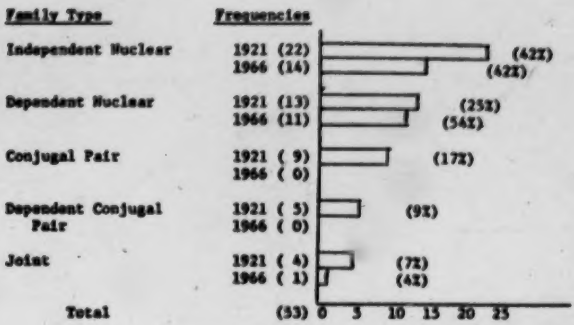
13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128

Figure I

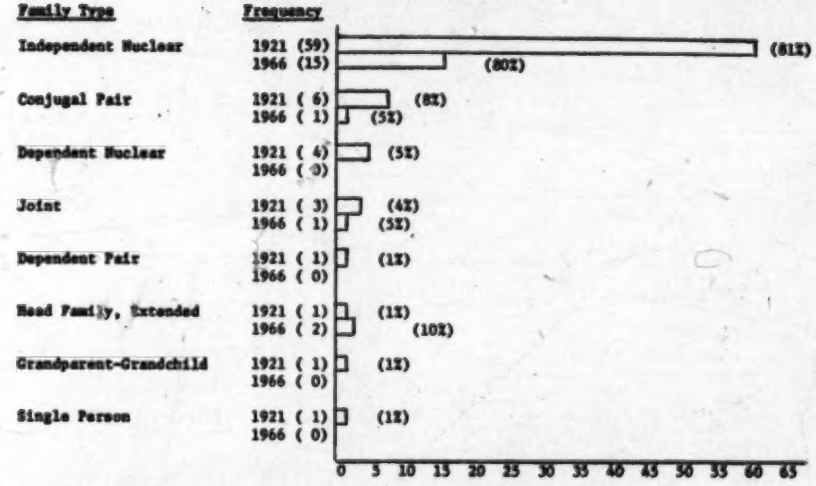
BAR CHART. STAGE I FAMILIES, BY TYPES AND AGE OF HEADS*




*Raw Frequencies and Percentages of Family Types; Age of Heads 20-34, 53 Blackfeet families, Independent Nuclear Families predominate.

Figure II

BAR CHART. STAGE II FAMILIES, BY TYPES AND AGE OF HEADS*




*Raw Frequencies and Percentages of Family Types; Age of Heads 35-49, 76 Blackfoot families; Independent Nuclear Families predominate.

592
594
596
128

Like Stage III (Figure III) in the 1966 rural Blackfeet family cycle, the 1921 sample shows a predominance of independent nuclear families. Families in multiple-family households account for 30 per cent of all Stage III families in 1966 and 28 per cent in 1921, a very close comparison. At this stage elder parents pick up married dependents (dependent conjugal pairs and dependent nuclear families). The greatest frequencies of occurrence of head families are in the 60-64 age interval (seven cases) and 65-69 (five cases).

The only important contrast between the 1921 and 1966 rural samples in Stage IV (Figure IV) is the higher percentages of grandparent-grandchild non-families in 1966. I have partially discussed this difference in my analysis of demography. Once again, it can be seen that elders pick up various kinsmen in the last stage of the family cycle. More than 62 per cent of the elders in this stage have dependents which includes those with unmarried offspring, married offspring, and grandchildren. In 1966, 80 per cent of the eldest families have closely related dependents with them. If, as shown, at least four-fifths of the eldest families among the rural Blackfeet must continue supporting and in part being supported by various dependents, the prospects are dismal for elderly and young families.

121

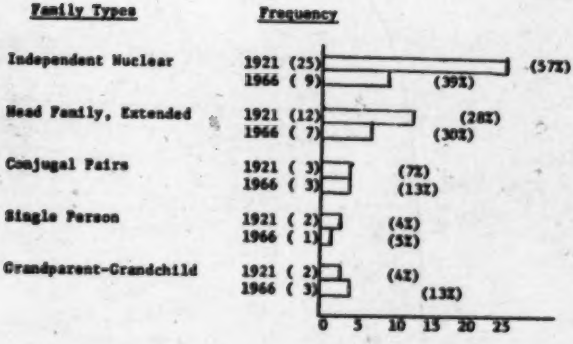
Two additional aspects of the 1921 rural families and households deserve mention prior to my concluding observation. The first is the composition and age of head families in extended family households and the second is the number of matrifocal and patrifocal households. Both of these subjects are included for comparisons with the 1966 data so as

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 104]

592
594
596
128

Figure III

BAR CHART. STAGE III FAMILIES, BY TYPES AND AGE OF HEADS*




*Raw Frequencies and Percentages of Family Types; Age of Heads 30-64, 44 Blackfoot families, Independent Nuclear Families predominate.

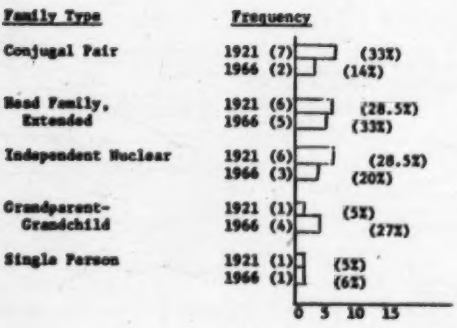
13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128

Figure IV

BAR CHART. STAGE IV FAMILIES, BY TYPES AND AGE OF HEADS*




*Raw Frequencies and Percentages of Family Types; Ages of Heads 65 years plus, 21 Blackfeet families, Conjugal Pairs Predominate.

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



596
128 Table 15 shows ages and family types of host families in extended family households.

As I showed earlier, there is a higher percentage of both multiple-family households (which takes into account joint family households) and extended family households in the 1966 rural sample than in the 1921 rural sample. In 1966, 22 per cent of the 68 rural households are extended or joint, while only 11 per cent were of these types in the 167 household sample of household in 1921, an important difference.

Table 15, below, shows that single persons headed more extended family households than any other type of family or family remnant in the ascending generation (37 per cent). The same non-family type headed 29 per cent of the 1966 extended family households, a close comparison with the 1921 figures. Independent nuclear families in the 1966 sample headed 35 per cent of the extended family households and 26 per cent of the extended family households in 1921 were headed by independent nuclear families; this difference, although not statistically significant, is the result of increased survival rates of offspring and the under- and unemployment of adults in the descending generation as I have shown. Conjugal pairs account for only two head non-families in the 1966 sample (22 per cent), and 31 per cent in 1921, or a total of six. Grandparent-grandchild non-families were hosts in three 1966 extended family households (22 per cent) and only one in 1921 (6 per cent), another indication of the effect of increased survival rates on the composition of current extended family households. A final comparison shows that the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 109]

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128

Table 15

OLD AGENCY AND HEART BUTTE DISTRICT ASCENDING FAMILIES IN EXTENDED FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS, AGE AND FAMILY TYPE, 19 HEADS, 1921*

| Family Type | Frequency | Age of Heads |
|---|---|---|
| Single Person | 7 | 60, 63, 64, 70, 70, 78, 80 |
| Conjugal Pair | 6 | 44, 52, 52, 60, 61, 62 |
| Independent Nuclear | 5 | 51, 57, 61, 66, 73 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | 1 | 56 |
| Total | 19 | Age Range: 44-80 |

*This table does not include joint families.

594
596
128

range in age of host families or non-families is similar: 44-80 in 1921 and 41-78 in 1966.

These comparisons indicate that extended family households in the past and present are essentially similar; dependencies were common in the past as they are in the present, although increased survival rates and poor economic opportunites have altered some aspects of household composition. We see from these comparisons that elders in the past and in the present seldom escape from the onus of supporting dependents; additionally, those same elders benefit from the presence of persons in the descending generation.

121

## Matrifocal and Patrifocal Households--1921 and 1966 Rural Households

Here I compare briefly the ages and sex of heads of matrifocal and patrifocal households. Sociological and anthropological literature are replete with data and analyses of these types of households. Usually these household types occur with greatest frequency among impoverished minorities, most especially among Blacks in the urban United States and where seasonal wage labor has called for male workers in areas away from home districts. The center of academic inquiry has largely focused on matrifocal households as correlated with welfare systems and migrant wage labor. In the United States, Aid to Dependent Children welfare assistance has been singled out as a form of penalizing underemployed and unemployed males who are not permitted to reside with their dependents if this form of welfare is to be received. Males find it expedient to remain away from their spouses and offspring because ADC

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128

Table 16

MATRIFOCAL AND PATRIFOCAL HOUSEHOLDS, 16 HEART BUTTE AND OTHER RURAL HOUSEHOLDS, 1966

| Sex and Age of Head | Reason for Separation from Spouse | Household Type | Number and Types of Dependents in Household |
|---|---|---|---|
| F 64 | Widow | Extended | Married son, his spouse and his 2 offspring (4) |
| F 41 | Broken Union | Extended | Daughter-in-law, her daughter, her brother and head's son (4) |
| F 78 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 3 adult offspring |
| F 65 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 2 adult offspring, 2 grandchildren (9) |
| F 38 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring |
| F 31 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 1 offspring |
| F 27 | Broken Union | Joint | 2 offspring, married sister, sister's spouse, sister's 5 offspring (9) |
| M 72 | Broken Union | Extended | Step-grandson, his spouse, and 1 offspring (3) |
| M 70 | Broken Union | Extended | Married daughter, her spouse and 7 offspring, 1 additional grandchild (10) |
| M 60 | Widower | Extended | Married son, his spouse and 5 offspring (7) |
| M 53 | Widower | Extended | Married son, his spouse and 3 offspring (5) |
| M 69 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | Daughter and daughter's illegitimate offspring (2) |

592
594
596
128

Table 16 (Continued)

| Sex and Age of Head | Reason for Separation from Spouse | Household Type | Number and Types of Dependents in Household |
|---|---|---|---|
| M 63 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 1 adult offspring |
| M 60 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 4 offspring (1 adult) |
| M 40 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 6 offspring |
| M 62 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 1 grandchild |

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128

Table 17

MATRIFOCAL AND PATRIFOCAL HOUSEHOLDS, 28 OLD AGENCY AND HEART BUTTE DISTRICT FAMILIES, 1921

| Sex and Age of Head | Reason for Separation from Spouse | Household Type | Number and Types of Dependents in Household |
|---|---|---|---|
| F 56 | Widow | Grandparent-Grandchild | 1 grandchild |
| F 55 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 1 offspring |
| F 42 | Widow | Grandparent-Grandchild | 1 grandchild |
| F 40 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring, 4 grandchildren (6) |
| F 72 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring, 1 younger brother (4) |
| F 26 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring |
| F 63 | Widow | Extended | Married offspring and spouse of offspring (2) |
| F 60 | Widow | Extended | Married offspring and spouse of offspring (2) |
| F 80 | Widow | Extended | Married offspring and spouse of offspring (2) |
| F 45 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring |
| F 64 | Widow | Extended | Married offspring, spouse of offspring and 1 grandchild (3) |
| F 30 | Widow | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring |

592
594
596
128

Table 17 (Continued)

| Sex and Age of Head | Reason for Separation from Spouse | Household Type | Number and Types of Dependents in Household |
|---|---|---|---|
| M 50 | Broken Union | Independent Nuclear | 1 offspring, 1 unrelated male (2) |
| M 38 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring |
| M 43 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 1 offspring |
| M 49 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring |
| M 73 | Widower | Extended | Married offspring and spouse and 1 unmarried offspring (3) |
| M 57 | Widower | Extended | Married offspring and spouse and 1 unmarried offspring (3) |
| M 70 | Widower | Extended | Married offspring and spouse and 1 unmarried offspring (3) |
| M 58 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 1 offspring |
| M 50 | Widower | Extended | Married offspring and spouse (2) |
| M 55 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring |
| M 54 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring |
| M 70 | Widower | Extended | Married offspring, spouse and 2 offspring (4) |
| M 35 | Widower | Joint | 1 offspring with married son and brother-in-law (3) |

572
.5J1
546
128

Table 17 (Continued)

| Sex and Age of Head | Reason for Separation from Spouse | Household Type | Number and Types of Dependents in Household |
|---|---|---|---|
| M 43 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 3 offspring |
| M 62 | Widower | Independent Nuclear | 2 offspring |

128 sections of the town on a broadly proportionate basis. The types and frequencies are shown in Table 18.

592 Two hundred and twelve persons occupy the 39 households. The
128 age distribution of these persons is presented in the following table (Table 19) where broad age intervals of 0-21, 22-64, and 65 plus are
592 used for demographic comparison with previously analyzed samples. The
128 trend line and percentages of persons in the three age intervals compares
369 closely with the figures from the present rural districts (see Chapter III).

591 The median number of persons per household is 4.7; for multiple-
596 family households the figure is 7.5 and the median for independent
369 nuclear family households is 6.5. In comparison with the 1966 rural
128 sample these median figures show some contrasts. There are fewer per-
592 sons per household in the Browning sample (4.7 against 5.8), fewer persons per nuclear family household (6.5 against 7.4) and more persons per multiple-family household (7.5 against 7.3). Table 20 compares the percentages of household types in the Browning and rural samples.

The rural sample clearly shows a statistically significant difference at the .05 level in the percentage of multiple-family households (21 per cent against 5 per cent) although other types of households occur in rather comparable percentages, as Table 20 shows. In all I gathered household composition data for 88 households, which includes the 39 cases in the preceding tables that were interviewed in considerable detail; of the 89, five are multiple-family--all are extended, dual-family households--which amount to only about 6 per cent

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 123]

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128
369

Table 18

THIRTY-NINE BROWNING HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPES,
1967, 1968 AND 1970

| Household Type | Frequency |
|---|---|
| Independent Nuclear | 26 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | 5 |
| Conjugal Pair | 5 |
| Extended Family* | 2 |
| Single Person | 1 |
| Total | 39 |

*Two families reside in each of the extended family households.

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
128
369

Table 20

COMPARATIVE FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF HOUSEHOLD TYPES, 68 RURAL HOUSEHOLDS AND 39 BROWNING HOUSEHOLDS, 1967, 1968, AND 1970

| Household Type | Browning (Frequencies) | Rural (Frequencies) | Percentage of Total Households | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | (Browning) | (Rural) |
| Independent Nuclear | 26 | 39 | 67 | 58 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | 5 | 7 | 13 | 10 |
| Extended | 2 | 14 | 5 | 21 |
| Conjugal Pair | 5 | 5 | 13 | 7 |
| Single Person | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 |
| Joint | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Totals | 39 | 68 | 100 | 100 |

592 of the total. I will discuss this larger sample in more detail momen-
594 tarily.
596 The Browning household pattern contrasts significantly in the
128 occurrence of multiple-family households. I will show that though
369 fewer families in my Browning sample cluster under a single roof, there
592 is considerable inter-household economic cooperation where such coopera-
594 tion is possible. A family in Browning can better manage a single
369 dwelling in some respects, as compared with the rural setting. Trans-
128 portation, for example, is not as much of a problem to those in Browning
[594] since one can easily walk to his job, grocery stores, etc., whereas in
the rural districts transportation assistance is often required when a
family alone cannot afford the convenience of a private vehicle.
592 Secondly, and more importantly, ADC-recipient matrifocal household
687 heads receive more assistance in Browning in securing quarters through
369 the welfare offices. Another factor is the relative scarcity of avail-
362
[602] able low income kin with whom some of the low and unstable income
families in Browning can join under one roof. The kinship network in
602 the rural districts is more tightly knit, with more frequent economic
369 interchanges between closely related families.

Browning is more urbanized in the sense that atomization and isolation of kin units occur with greater frequency. This is relative, however, because in Browning one finds a good deal of mutual, kin-based aid, as I will discuss below.

124 While in Browning I secured additional household composition data
129 from random sources so as to obtain a larger sample than the 39 household

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
128
594
596

Table 21

EIGHTY-NINE BROWNING HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE,
1967, 1968, 1970

| Household Type | Frequency | Per Cent of All Households |
|---|---|---|
| Independent Nuclear | 63 | 72 |
| Conjugal Pair | 9 | 10 |
| Grandp..rent-Grandchild | 7 | 8 |
| Extended | 5 | 5 |
| Single Person | 5 | 5 |
| Totals | 89 | 100 |

SR2
S84
S16
H34
128



Correlation Ratio Diagram III

FAMILY TYPE AND AMOUNT OF FAMILY INCOME,
41 BROWNING FAMILIES, 1967-1970

| Family Type | 300 1299 | 1300 2299 | 2300 3299 | 3300 4299 | 4300 5299 | 5300 6299 | 6300 7299 | 7300 8299 | 8300 9299 | 9300 10299 | 10300 11299 | 11300 12299 | 12300 13299 | Mean Family Income |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single Person | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 6800 |
| Independent Nuclear | | 2 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 1 | | | 2 | 2 | | | 3 | 5453 |
| Conjugal Pair | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | 4800 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | | 2 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | 2400 |
| Head Family in Extended Family Household | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 2300 |
| Dependent Nuclear | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1800 |

Annual Family Income in Intervals of $1000 X (Income)

$\eta^2_{xy} = .21$

----- = Trend line

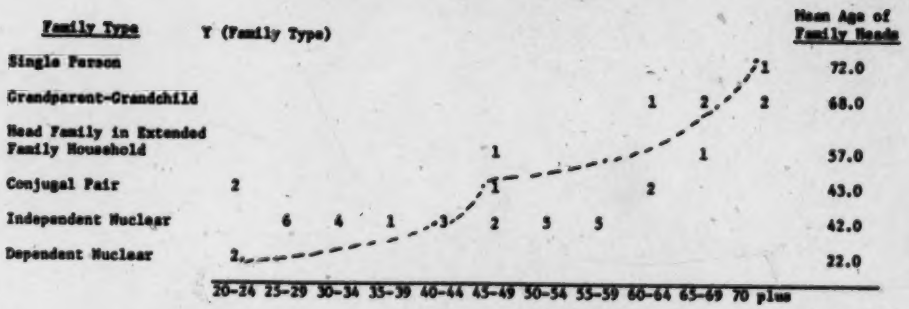
592
S9R
B16
128

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



Correlation Ratio Diagram IV

FAMILY TYPES AND AGE OF FAMILY HEADS, 41 BROWNING FAMILIES, 1967-1970




$\eta_{xy}^2 = .39$

---- = Trend line

592
591
596
128

Correlation Ratio Diagram V

FAMILY TYPES AND AGE OF FAMILY HEADS, 94 BROWNING FAMILIES, 1967-1970

| Family Type | 20-24 | 25-29 | 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 | 45-49 | 50-54 | 55-59 | 60-64 | 65-69 | 70 plus | Mean Age of Family Heads |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single Person | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 2 | 68.0 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 66.3 |
| Head Family in Extended Family Household | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | 2 | 60.0 |
| Conjugal Pair | 2 | | | | | 2 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | | 49.7 |
| Independent Nuclear | 1 | 11 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 42.0 |
| Dependent Nuclear | 2 | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | | | 27.0 |

Age of Heads in Interval of 5 Years

Y (Family Type)

X (Age)

$\eta^2_{xy} = .27$

----- = Trend line

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NP6 Blackfoot NP6
Piegan
Montana

13: Robbins E-4,5 (1967-1970) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana



592
594
596
369
128

Table 28

THREE-SAMPLE COMPARISON OF MEAN AGE OF FAMILY HEADS, 94 BROWNING FAMILIES, 41 BROWNING FAMILIES AND 83 RURAL BLACKFE T FAMILIES, 1966, 1967, 1968 AND 1970

| Family Type | 94 Browning Families (Mean Age of Heads) | 41 Browning Families (Mean Age of Heads) | 83 Rural Families (Mean Age of Heads) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Single Person | 68.0 | 72.0 | 64.6 |
| Grandparent-Grandchild | 66.3 | 68.0 | 65.6 |
| Head Family (Extended) | 60.0 | 57.0 | 60.6 |
| Conjugal Pair | 49.7 | 43.0 | 58.0 |
| Independent Nuclear | 42.0 | 42.0 | 40.8 |
| Dependent Nuclear | 27.0 | 22.0 | 27.8 |

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve



which the produce was distributed. Within these groups also were specialists in native skills such as porcupine quilling, tipi cutting, catching eagles, and curing the sick. For a suitable return the service of one of these specialists could be obtained. Recreation took the form of a hoop and dart game, horse races, ceremonial rites and dances, all involving mainly members of the local group. Mutual obligations of care and shelter were based on real or putative kinship. A widow contributed her talents to the household of a son, daughter, brother or sister in return for food and shelter. Grandparents might bring up an orphan as one of their own. Though the source of many commodities was already the trading post or the agency, the group worked together and shared in common.

Under contemporary conditions a few of these features remain. The medicine-man continues but the other specialists have disappeared. Recreational groups are made up of people who by chance happen to be in a given locality at a particular time, like the workers at the coal-mines or the haying camps. The stampedes, the Owl Dances, the hockey games, the residual age societies and the occasional religious rite are tribal in scope, attracting interested persons from all the reserve. A reduced kinship group alone preserves most of its functions with its obligations of co-operation and sharing. In many respects the reserve residents are thus more unified than ever before, but in earning and sharing they are more divided.

To the officially recognized family of husband, wife, and children go the returns from cattle, wheat, wages, and annuities. Yet many obligations between generations, siblings, and in-laws remain intact and serve as the main channels of distribution. Though the permanent obligations to a wide group of kinsmen are fewer, the social structure continues in keeping with altered conditions. Today the size of the kinship group is partially limited by the geographical distribution of houses, but a more important factor is the generally increased and better distributed wealth. The Blackfoot are neither so poor nor so well-off as formerly; the range of wealth is narrowed. While there are fewer indigents, at the same time fewer are able to support many indigents. By and large the agency has assumed the care of what indigents there are. In many cases an elderly person lives with a biological family; other families have adopted children. But despite the contribution of more rations and annuities, only a small per cent of the total can afford to maintain many dependents over an indefinite period of time in the old way. Nevertheless, when

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve



563 government charity for over forty years, surviving as best they could. Admission was granted to these families and subsequently to a few others of the same band.

Today these Indians constitute a special group which lives somewhat apart and is identified as "Cree" by the Blackfoot. They are distinct from the Cree wives of Blackfoot and the descendants of adopted Crees whose past affiliation with Crees, though recognized, does not constitute a basis for special social status. The new-comers receive all the benefits of the Blackfoot trust fund. They have constructed their own coal-mine and continue their own ceremonials. 563 Indeed, they use for their own purposes the Sun Dance lodge that 796 has been erected by the Blackfoot for Blackfoot rituals. In 1939, with no Sun Dance vower from the majority group, the Crees offered to save the day by holding the ceremonies according to their tradition. Some Blackfoot participated with interest, most were grateful and somewhat satisfied at having a "sort of a Sun Dance," but many were arrogantly critical of these proceedings. The Crees, on the defensive, resolved to impress these spectators with the ceremonial rigours and the strength of their power. One night, after the chief vower had fasted for more than forty-eight hours, in the presence of a few curious spectators the aged vower was said to have made the moon dance to the beat of his drum. Respect for the Crees rose perceptibly, and though this group is treated by local reserve residents as inferior, it is now probable that as its economic position improves, differences will disappear.

## Social Structure and Kinship

504 The band having disappeared, there remains as the present 592 nucleus for living the individual family of husband, wife, and chil- [829] dren. However, it is unusual for a family to remain long so small as this, for people consider themselves lonely and isolated under these circumstances. Only the recluses or very poor live alone with 596 their wives and children. As we have noted, a young man and his wife will come to live with an older brother or one of the husband's brothers-in-law. In this household the two men help each other with the work in the fields, while their wives collaborate on baby [178] care and household chores. Such a system is a direct continuation [593] of the time-honoured kinship obligations between brothers, and [607] between a man and his sister's husband or his wife's brother.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve



The extended families that quickly dissipate are those with insufficient wealth to support many individuals and no central figure to carry the burden of leadership. Those loyal to the deceased will have other loyalties which compete with the successor. Successors with more of a flare for enjoying themselves than for maintaining the family assets lose their legacies and become dependents upon the more sagacious. Moreover, without a strong successor, quarrels over the legacy arise. In view of the multitudinous relatives recognized in Blackfoot society, particularly after several marriages, claimants for the property may be numerous. One recently contested estate consisting of horses and cattle was left intestate, though the deceased had given away the body of his horses before death. The claimants for the cattle were: (1) a classificatory older brother of the deceased, actually the dead man's mother's brother; (2) a classificatory young brother, actually the dead man's father's sister's son; (3) an adopted daughter; (4) a nephew, the exact relationship being unknown. As the nephew had already received the horses, this gift was confirmed by the council of chiefs, and the cattle were awarded to the adopted daughter; the other claims were unrecognized.

Today, households that are economically successful tend to become independent. Many Stars predicted at treaty time, "You will all be chiefs." As each household with a plough, harrow, and binder no longer needs the economic assistance of a chief, the main relationship to the leader is sentimental. The leader of a stable, extended family draws his followers from those without means, the young who have not yet obtained the tools of production, and the aged who need shelter and companionship. White law and administration have further weakened the system by the assumption that the conjugal biological family is the social unit to be preserved. For example, the levirate, which entrusted a younger brother with the care of his older brother's widow, is unrecognized in English law; today the widow must rejoin her own relatives pending remarriage and usually goes to the home of the one who is best able to support her, preferably her older brother. Furthermore, the head of an extended family has no officially recognized place in the political system. Few leaders of extended families are members of the council of chiefs, because, as we have shown, it is a frustrating position. Unofficially the head of an extended family may carry as much or more weight among Indians than many elected chiefs. A member